

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's indication of the allowability of the subject matter of claim 10 is respectfully acknowledged. New claim 11 has been added to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 10 in independent form, and it is respectfully suggested that new claim 11 is now in condition for immediate allowance.

THE AMENDMENT TO CLAIM 1

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that heat is applied through the frame to predetermined parts of the glass tube from outside the frame, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 15, lines 29-34 that the glass tube in the frame is "heated at predetermined positions as with the above-mentioned first embodiment" (i.e., as shown in Fig. 12, but through the frame 28 shown in Fig. 15A).

It is respectfully submitted that the amendment to claim 1 is clarifying in nature only, and that no new matter has been added and no new issues have been raised which require further consideration on the merits and/or a new search. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the amendment to claim 1 be approved and entered under 37 CFR 1.116.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1, 3-4 and 9 were rejected as being obvious over Berkey (USP 4,822,389) in view of Berkey (USP 5,152,816). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed with respect to claim 1 as amended hereinabove as well as with respect to claims 3-4 and 9 depending therefrom.

As recognized by the Examiner, Berkey (USP 4,822,389) discloses a method of heating predetermined parts of a glass tube having an internal hole while applying pressure into said internal hole, to expand said predetermined parts, thus forming tapered portions. As also recognized by the Examiner, however, Berkey (USP 4,822,389) fails to disclose, teach or suggest placing the tube into a frame and heating the tube "from outside the frame".

For this reason, the Examiner has cited Berkey (USP 5,152,816) for the disclosure in Fig. 5 thereof of elements 33-36 which form a support device 37 for supporting a tube 38 while it is heated from outside the support device 37. And at the bottom of page 2 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the support device 37 corresponds to the frame of the claimed present invention and would inherently restrict an increase in the outside diameter of the glass tube.

It is respectfully pointed out, however, that the heating in Berkey (USP 5,152,816) takes place from above the tube 38 and above the support device 37 - and not through the support device 37. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that

Berkey (5,152,816) fails to disclose, teach or suggest the feature of the method of the present invention as recited in (second) amended claim 1 whereby heat is applied through the frame to predetermined parts of the glass tube from outside the frame. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that the support device 37 of Berkey (5,152,816) would not inherently restrict an increase in the outside diameter of the glass tube at the point where the glass tube is heated, as is achieved by the method of the claimed present invention. And in this connection, it is again respectfully submitted that the method of the claimed present invention achieves a significant advantageous effect in that tapers (26a) can be formed without the outside diameter of the drawn glass tube (25) increasing at the expanded portion (25a), as described in the specification at page 25, line 35 to page 26, line 2.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that even if the teachings of Berkey (USP 4,822,389) and Berkey (USP 5,152,816) were combinable in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the method of the present invention as recited in (second) amended claim 1 would still not be achieved or rendered obvious. And it is therefore respectfully submitted that (second) amended claim 1 and claims 3-4 and 9 (and allowable claim 10) depending therefrom all patentably distinguish over the cited references, taken singly or in any combination, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Second Amended) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers, comprising:

placing a glass tube having an internal hole into a frame;
and

5 applying heat through the frame to [heating] predetermined parts of the glass tube from outside the frame while applying pressure into said internal hole of the glass tube so as to expand said predetermined parts, thus forming tapered portions;
wherein the frame restricts an increase in an outside
10 diameter of the glass tube.